housing, the magnetic element being configured to magnetically draw the latch of the second housing into clasping engagement with the catch of the first housing to mechanically secure the second housing relative to the first housing.

5. The device as recited in claim **4** wherein the catch is disposed in its entirety within the first housing.

6. A portable computer comprising:

a base;

a lid pivotally mounted to the base, the lid being movable between a closed position having the lid substantially flush with the base, and an open position having the lid away from the base; and

a securing system that holds the lid relative to the base when the lid is in the closed position, the securing system including a base side locking mechanism and a lid side locking mechanism that are magnetically attracted to one another such that they lockably engage each other when the lid is positioned proximate the base, the base side locking mechanism including a button for releasing the locking mechanisms from engagement.

7. The portable computer as recited in claim **6** wherein the lid side locking mechanism is hidden within the lid when the lid is in the open position, and wherein the base side locking mechanism is hidden within the base when the lid is in the open position.

8. The portable computer as recited in claim **7** wherein the lid is pivotally mounted to the base via a hinge mechanism, the hinge mechanism being configured for automatically positioning the lid in a partially open position when the lid is free from the base, and for holding the lid in a more fully opened position when the lid is further opened from the partially open position.

9. The portable computer as recited in claim **8** wherein the hinge mechanism includes a spring element for continuously exerting a biasing force on the lid in a direction away from the base so as to position the lid in the partially open position.

10. The portable computer as recited in claim **9** wherein the base side locking mechanism comprises a catch, wherein the lid side locking mechanism comprises a latch, and wherein the latch and the catch work together to hold the lid closed against the biasing force exerted by the spring element.

11. The portable computer as recited in claim **10** wherein the latch is movably coupled to the lid, and wherein the catch is movably coupled to the base.

12. The portable computer as recited in claim **11** wherein the catch comprises a magnetic element for causing the latch to lockably engage the catch when the lid is moved to the closed position.

13. A portable computer comprising:

a base having a catch disposed therein, the catch being movable relative to and pivotally mounted to the base;

a lid pivotally mounted to the base, the lid being movable between a closed position, placing the lid substantially flush with the base, and an open position, placing the lid away from the base, the lid having a retractable latch disposed therein, the retractable latch being movable relative to and pivotally mounted to the lid,

wherein the retractable latch automatically moves between a first latch position, hiding the latch within the lid when the lid is moved to the open position, and a second latch position, engaging the catch when the lid is moved to the closed position, and wherein the catch moves between a first catch position, engaging the latch to prevent movement of the lid relative to the base, and a second catch position, releasing the latch therefrom to permit movement of the lid & relative to the base.

14. The portable computer as recited in claim **13** wherein the latch pivots in a first plane, and wherein the catch pivots in a second plane that is different than the first plane.

15. The portable computer as recited in claim **13** wherein a first spring element is used to continuously exert a first biasing force on the latch so as to place the latch in the first latch position, and wherein a second spring element is used to continuously exert a second biasing force on the catch so as to place the catch in the first catch position.

16. The portable computer as recited in claim **15** wherein the magnetic force is produced by a magnetic element disposed within the base.

17. The portable computer as recited in claim **16** wherein the magnetic element is coupled to the catch, and wherein the magnetic element magnetically draws the latch towards the catch when the latch is proximate the catch.

18. The portable computer as recited in claim **13** wherein a magnetic force is used to move the latch from the first latch position to the second latch position.

19. The portable computer as recited in claim **13** wherein the catch includes a release button attached thereto for moving the catch from the first catch position to the second catch position.

20. The portable computer as recited in claim **19** wherein the release button protrudes from a side of the catch and extends into a hole positioned in a side of the base.

21. A locking mechanism for locking first and second housings of a computer device together, comprising:

a latch that is rotatably coupled to the first housing about a first rotational axis; and

a catch that is rotatably coupled to the second housing about a second rotational axis, the second rotational axis being transverse to the first rotational axis, the latch being configured to rotate about the first rotational axis in order to lockably engage with the catch, the catch being configured to rotate about the second rotational axis in order to releasably disengage the latch therefrom.

22. A computer device, comprising:

a first housing;

a second housing movable relative to the first housing; and

a locking system for mechanically securing the second housing relative to the first housing, the locking system including a latch that is movable relative to the second housing and that is magnetically forced into clasping engagement with a portion or component of the first housing to mechanically secure the second housing relative to the first housing, the locking system including a magnetic element disposed within the first housing and a catch that is movable relative to the first housing, the magnetic element being configured to magnetically draw the latch of the second housing into clasping engagement with the catch of the first housing to mechanically secure the second housing relative to the first housing, the catch being disposed in its entirety within the first housing.

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